



John M. Rohman
Photo: Ken D'Errico

Part of my fall will include a trip to Washington, D.C., for a meeting at the National Assembly of States Arts Agencies where I hope to spend some time with the new chair of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), Rocco Landesman. Based on comments from colleagues and from articles in various print media, I believe we will see a different approach to the NEA. I would hope that the previous NEA chairman, Dana Gioia, would agree that the two specific foci of his tenure were broad-based exposure with activity in all U.S. congressional districts and an emphasis on special programs like Poetry Out Loud.

Maine has been well served in the last few years, and I am pleased to say that grants given to specific arts groups in addition to the Maine Arts Commission were significant (yes — also relative to other states!). Donna McNeil and I always make a point of describing how well these dollars are utilized for our high-quality artists and organizations.

If the early reports prove accurate, Rocco may not approach the NEA with the same geographic spread. Instead, he may look at the quality of the particular application and institution. With the outstanding organizations we have in Maine, I fully expect us to capitalize on this approach and again see positive results. Rocco has also discussed the need to dramatically increase the NEA's budget.

The way the formula works is 40 percent of the NEA budget goes to state arts agencies; therefore, any increases on the federal level will have a positive impact for the Maine Arts Commission. This has been true in the past, and clearly if the chairman is successful in his funding goals, we will benefit. However, with all that is happening on the economic front, we may have to cross our fingers (and toes!). Hopefully I will be able to give firsthand feedback after my trip to D.C.

Before I sign off, I wanted to mention another successful American Folk Festival in Bangor. I was sitting next to Cindy Larock (a recipient of the Traditional Arts Master grant from the Maine Arts Commission in past years) during an Ethiopian dance performance right before I went to see a Penobscot Indian basket demonstration. Here it occurred to me that the connection between our local arts and arts from all over the country through various events and programs provides exceptional artistic quality to the people of Maine. With talent like we have in Maine, no matter what approach the NEA takes in its next funding chapter, Maine will be there at the forefront.

John M. Rohman, Chair

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Message from the Chair
2	Letter from the Director
3	Maine Arts Recovery
7	Maine Arts in Education
9	Introducing the 2010 Fellows
15	Traditional Arts
17	Remembering Marion Stocking and Edward D. Ives
18	American Masterpieces
21	Artists in Maine Communities
24	Cultural Facilities
27	Hold That Date! The Juice Conference Is Coming
29	Performing Arts and Media Arts Take the Stage
31	Meet the New MaineArts.com
32	The Challenges of Public Art in 2009
35	Agency Listing



Donna McNeil

Photo: Shoshannah White

Governor John Baldacci, Chairman Rocco Landesman and Thornton Wilder

Dear Friends,

Economic recovery takes time. The good news is the neoclassical Pythagorean system of economics based on scarcity is getting a long overdue boot. The cultural sector understands that creativity, originality and innovation are unlimited natural resources — like the wind — assets now recognized as valuable across all sectors. The Maine/American/global recession prompted a pragmatic rethinking of our values and priorities, and through that process we rediscovered our innate abundance. Creative folks have always rebuked the scarcity model, and that attitude serves us well now.

As we approach the last year of Governor Baldacci's second term, we reflect on its beginning, one that started with an understanding that Maine's economic reinvention could be powered in part through the arts. Eight years of making the case for the creative economy, watching the concept shift with circumstance, morph over time into a many fingered handshake which saw partnerships with downtown revitalization, historic preservation, build green, conservation groups, economic development districts, Mobilize Maine, Quality of Place and more, we stand poised for recovery.

Maine has become somewhat of a poster child for growth through integrity. Respecting our environmental, architectural and artistic legacy, fueled by Maine's can-do attitude, we boast the revitalization of many empty, ragged communities that have become energized through these sensible new coalitions: Eastport, Belfast, Damariscotta, Saco-Biddeford, Lewiston-Auburn, Stonington, Waterville, Hallowell, Gardiner, Blue Hill, Rockland, Westbrook and more.

The recognition of and investment in Maine's indigenous assets are working. *Our Towns*, one after another, are, through patient and diligent community efforts, redefining themselves and their economies for a prosperous future that retains and builds on their innate characteristics. The Maine Arts Commission is dedicated to the support of community efforts at revitalization through the recognition that cultural centers — theaters, galleries, studios, museums — are economic stimulators, meeting places where ideas, entertainment, beauty, conversation, organization and action take place. The Maine Arts Commission urges the cultural community to reject marginalization, to de-ghettoize itself, to claim *Our Town* as their town too, to understand that in partnership with all aspects of community will come success. The confirmation of the new chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, Rocco Landesman, and his recognition and support of the *Our Town* concept add momentum to this confluent moment. The arts have been going it alone for far too long. Economic revitalization is an ensemble piece — the cock crows.

To a prosperous future,

Donna

MAINE ARTS RECOVERY



▲ [ABOVE LEFT] Golden Dragon Acrobats. Courtesy of Bay Chambers Concerts [RIGHT] Daniel Bernard Roumain. Photo by Julieta Cervantes; Courtesy of Bay Chambers Concerts



The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) was signed into law by President Obama on February 17, 2009.

It is an unprecedented effort to jump-start our economy, create or save millions of jobs and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so our country can thrive in the 21st century. The act is an extraordinary response to a crisis unlike any since the Great Depression and includes measures to modernize our nation's infrastructure, enhance energy independence, expand educational opportunities, preserve and improve affordable health care, provide tax relief and protect those in greatest need. —National Endowment for the Arts, www.arts.gov

The national discussion surrounding stimulus funding inspired the creative community deeply and

broadly and largely guaranteed the National Endowment for the Arts "a place at the table." No other cultural sector organized the advocacy or established the clout to receive an independent allocation. It was a proud time for the arts lobby.

The result was an allocation of \$50 million in ARRA funds to the National Endowment for the Arts to be distributed through its partners — the state, regional and local arts agencies — and directly to American arts organizations. Maine arts organizations benefited from these three delivery mechanisms as well. Applicants had the opportunity to pursue funds through the National Endowment for the Arts directly, the New England Foundation for the Arts or the Maine Arts Commission depending on certain eligibility categories. To date, 21 organizations have received \$355,000 in ARRA funding.

BAY CHAMBER CONCERTS AND THE STIMULUS

Dr. Thomas Wolf, Artistic and Executive Director of Bay Chamber Concerts and a principal with Wolf-

Brown, an international consulting company serving the arts and philanthropic communities.

Most of us, at some point in our lives, have dreamt about suddenly coming into a whole lot of unexpected cash to give away. We can imagine ways we might change the world with a fat pocketbook. Then, too, those of us who run nonprofit organizations fantasize about being on the receiving end of such largesse. "Oh, what we could do with unexpected money, if only donors would leave us alone to spend it the way we would like."

In real life, the agenda of the philanthropist and the needs of the nonprofit organization do not always align, especially when funds are suddenly available and have to be given away quickly. Nonprofits often find themselves contorting their activities and structures in order to secure grants.

The federal stimulus package of 2009 posed special challenges. The money had to be moved quickly. In the case of the arts-related stimulus money, the intent was to promote employment and avoid the



▲ **Flower**, 2006, Fiber, 9 x 16½", Betty Carter, Topsham. Photo: Jay York

—
 News of the stimulus
 money has allowed us
 to save the position and
 reenergize donors.
 —

elimination of jobs but also to promote long-term impact. But how does one turn a quick expenditure of cash into something of lasting value? What will keep a saved employee on the payroll once the stimulus money has run out?

At Bay Chamber Concerts in Rockport, we were fortunate that the opportunity for stimulus money came at just the right moment. Four years ago, as we were completing a five-year plan that would take us through our 50th anniversary in 2010, we looked at our situation and saw many challenges. As a year-round presenter of the performing arts — primarily of high-quality concerts — in mid-coast Maine and in other Maine communities, we saw increasing competition from other entertainment venues, audience growth stagnating, costs of artists' fees rising and the cost of professional staff increasing. We looked at an anticipated generational transition in leadership that we had not adequately prepared for and a potential threat to our donor base when a major employer — MBNA — departed the mid-coast.

On the other hand, we saw great opportunities for growth in the area of education. We had a perfect demographic for a community music school (surveys showed that demand would be brisk). We had a core faculty ready to be recruited in the area. We had funders who were interested in educational expansion that had not been interested in funding concerts. And most recently, a local corporation let us know that they would be willing to renovate a historic building for us. All we needed to do was develop and staff a business that would allow us to offload some of our personnel costs in the slower season (fall-winter-spring) to education and to bring in new sources of revenue (both earned and contributed). By last year, our plan was ahead of schedule.

Then came the economic meltdown. Our endowment shrank precipitously. A capital campaign was put on hold. Earned revenue declined. We made a series of cuts, but it wasn't enough. A key staff position essential to realizing our plan would have to be cut. At best, our plans would be slowed considerably.

Then came the stimulus grant opportunity. News of the stimulus money has allowed us to save the position and reenergize donors. With our Music Director of Education position still in place, with two recent challenge grants from key donors to stimulate new and increased giving and with our capital campaign back on track, Bay Chamber Concerts has regained its footing.

More important, literally hundreds of people of all ages will get to study music in a newly renovated historic building slated to open next summer. Sometimes a little money judiciously invested can make all the difference.

The Maine Arts Commission's Maine Arts Recovery funds will be delivered in two cycles to organizations that have suffered critical staffing cuts or can provide proof that an important existing position is in jeopardy. These stimulus dollars were designated to help arts organizations as well as Maine's creative workers in all genres of the arts.

In Western Maine for instance, thanks to a Maine Arts Recovery award, thousands of students and residents will be guaranteed access to the outstanding performing and visual arts programming historically implemented by the Mahoosuc Arts Council grant. This award ensures the continu-

ation of the executive director position, which is the critical link between the council and its ability to fulfill its important mission of supporting and advancing the arts and humanities in the adult communities and school systems of the greater Bethel area. With the vital director position secured, the council can now focus the majority of its efforts to raising the funds necessary to build a rich variety of programs including musical, dance and theatrical performances, fine arts and artisan exhibits and artist-in-residence programs featuring international, regional and local artists. The council works to make all of this programming accessible at little or no cost to each of the 1,165 SAD 44 and



^ **Water Lily Clouds**, 2007, Black and White Photograph, 8 x 12", Anne Brooks, Mt. Vernon



^ **Classic Ruin**, 1991, Lithograph, 18 x 13", Frank Valliere, Gorham



^ **Untitled** (diptych), 2007, Mixed Media Drawing, 12 x 9" each of two, Jeannine Sparhawk, Waldoboro

Gould Academy students, the 295 members of staff and faculty and the 4,000 residents in the region. Funding from the Maine Arts Recovery program was also awarded to VSA arts of Maine, a nonprofit organization that provides educational arts opportunities by, with and for people with disabilities and

at risk to fill the position of exhibition coordinator, which has been vacant since the fall of 2007.

This position serves as the heart of the programs for adult artists by providing organizational support for the series of exhibitions across the state,

"A Matter of Perception," which had 19 exhibits in 2008, from Machias to Denmark to Saco. This exhibition has provided one of the few opportunities for adult artists with disabilities in the State of Maine to show their work in a non-juried show. ■

Applicant	Community	Grant
NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS		
Alice James Poetry Collective, Inc.	Farmington	\$ 25,000.00
Bangor Folk Festival	Bangor	\$ 50,000.00
Cultural Resources, Inc.	Rockport	\$ 25,000.00
Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance	Old Town	\$ 50,000.00
Portland Maine Symphony Orchestra	Portland	\$ 25,000.00
Portland Ovations	Portland	\$ 25,000.00
SUBTOTAL		\$ 200,000.00
NEW ENGLAND FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS		
Bay Chamber Concerts	Rockport	\$ 15,000.00
Opera House Arts	Stonington	\$ 15,000.00
SUBTOTAL		\$ 30,000.00
MAINE ARTS COMMISSION		
Association Culturale et du Mont-Carmel	Lille	\$ 10,000.00
Friends of Daponte	Damariscotta	\$ 10,000.00
Johnson Hall Performing Arts Center	Gardiner	\$ 10,000.00
Kennebec Valley Art Association	Hallowell	\$ 10,000.00
L-A Arts	Lewiston	\$ 10,000.00
Lark Society for Chamber Music	Portland	\$ 6,000.00
Lincoln County Community Theater & Orchestra	Damariscotta	\$ 10,000.00
Mahoosuc Arts Council	Bethel	\$ 9,000.00
Penobscot Marine Museum	Searsport	\$ 10,000.00
Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture	New York City	\$ 10,000.00
Southern Aroostook Cultural Arts Project	Houlton	\$ 10,000.00
VSA arts of Maine	Brunswick	\$ 10,000.00
Waterfall Arts	Belfast	\$ 10,000.00
SUBTOTAL		\$ 125,000.00
TOTAL		\$ 355,000.00

MAINE ARTS IN EDUCATION



▲ **[ABOVE RIGHT]** Team Maine. Gibson Fay-LeBlanc of Portland's The Telling Room; Jen Ryan of Harvard's Project Zero; Sue Gendron, Commissioner of Education; Donna McNeil, Maine Arts Commission Director; Linda Nelson, Executive Director of Opera House Arts at the Stonington Opera House, and former Attorney General, Steve Rowe

There is some magic that happens at a good conference. A little bubble of idealism and hope is created by the swirl of provocative ideas, new and interesting faces and (hopefully) good food.

Over the summer, I joined a team from Maine and teams from four other states at the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Education Leaders Institute in Chicago. Led by Donna McNeil, director of the Maine Arts Commission, the Maine team also included Sue Gendron, commissioner of education; former Attorney General Steve Rowe; Jen Ryan of Harvard's Project Zero; and Linda Nelson, executive director of Opera House Arts at the Stonington Opera House and Maine Arts Commission member.

We all arrived in Chicago expecting to create a plan to increase the focus on the arts in Maine's schools and organizations. By the second day, after inspiring presentations and discussions with arts leaders like Colleen Macklin, chair of the Design and Technology Department at the Parsons School for Design, and Chike Nwoffiah, artist and founder of

the Oriki Theater in California, we realized collectively that our focus might be too narrow. The more we talked, the more we realized that this experience was challenging us to rethink the way we see education in Maine. It's not merely about giving the arts a more prominent place at the table, though that remains a vital goal.

We realized that Maine's future depends on the creativity, imagination and innovation of its people. And these skills — which are at the core of the 21st century economy — aren't often taught effectively inside or outside our local schools.

Over a few days, the team emerged from the institute with ideas to reframe learning both inside and outside Maine's schools. How can we keep more young people engaged in and excited about their education, steering them away from dropping out and preparing them to succeed in college and in life? How can we increase learning in and through the arts, giving students more opportunities for creative expression and giving teachers more tools to make classrooms increasingly learner-centered and learning more personalized?

We left the conference on a high, seeing Maine as a potential national leader in bringing more creativity and innovation into our educational system. Sarah

MAINE ARTS IN EDUCATION

The Maine Arts Commission, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation, presents Maine's fifth annual Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest.

Teachers! Become inspired by this program, have fun and experience surprising success "making poetry matter" for your students! Poetry Out Loud provides a great way to teach poetry and to help students with written and oral communication skills. There is more than \$100,000 in prizes awarded to students and schools nationally, and each winner at the state level receives an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington to compete for the national championship. The state-level championship takes place in early March 2010 (schools must register by Friday, December 18), and the national finals are in April 2010.

The Maine Arts Commission provides free multimedia curriculum materials — a poetry anthology, audio guide, teacher's guide, posters and a comprehensive website, www.poetryoutloud.org, all aligned to national standards.

MAINE'S 2010 CONGRESSIONAL ART AWARDS

Each year, the U.S. House of Representatives sponsors a competition for artworks created by high school students from every congressional district in the United States. The program recognizes the importance of student art on a grand scale. The winning entries are displayed in an exhibition in the U.S. Capitol for one year, beginning in June. This is the third year that the Maine Arts Commission will be involved in this competition by overseeing a digital competition for 2010 with the call for art going out in January. All high school students from the public and private sectors, with the help of their teachers or parents, can submit their work electronically for this competition.

The Maine Arts Commission announces the SMART (Schools Make Arts Relevant Today) grant program for fiscal year 2011 (school year 2010–2011).

The SMART (Schools Make Arts Relevant Today) grant program assists schools, arts institutions and community arts organizations to develop arts in education projects in conjunction with artists for pre-K–12 students. The program funds both school-based and after-school projects, such as residencies, workshops, performances, exhibition tours and traditional arts demonstrations, which provide meaningful and lasting arts education experiences. Professional development for teachers included in the project strengthens the proposal. The application deadline is April 30, 2010, for projects starting after July 1, 2010. The maximum award is \$10,000.

For further information about any of these opportunities, please contact Paul Faria at paul.faria@maine.gov, 207/287-2790.



▲ Kate Reynolds at the Poetry Out Loud state final

Cunningham, the education director of the NEA, acknowledged this, saying, "I'm blown away by the potential inroads possible in Maine, with the team that [Donna McNeil] put together."

Now that the idealism of the conference has been replaced by the reality of our daily work and personal lives, we're working on taking the next step. To create effective long-term change in education through the arts, we are convening a larger group of arts and education leaders to design a plan to kick-start Maine's learning environments. This "Maine Design Team" will include innovative thinkers from our local schools, higher education, the legislature, the business community, the arts community and

the Maine Learning Technology Initiative. The Maine Design Team will develop strategies for infusing all forms of education in Maine with creativity, imagination and innovation.

And so we haven't lost our idealism. Small as we are, Maine does have a chance to be among the world's leaders in teaching our young men and women to be creative thinkers, which will ensure our place in the global economy for years to come. Einstein has his theory of relativity, $E=MC^2$. We left Chicago with Maine's theory of prosperity, $P=LC^2$; that is, prosperity equals learning times creativity squared.

Gibson Fay-LeBlanc ■

—INTRODUCING THE 2010 FELLOWS—

The Maine Arts Commission is pleased to present the 2010 recipients of the Individual Artist Fellowship awards. Now, more than ever, it is important to honor excellence and to give artists working at the highest level the support they need to do their job.

JURORS

Performing Arts: Nathan Halvorson, Ricardo Iznaola, Carol Estey

Visual Arts: Victoria Fu, Louisa McCall, Ernesto Pujol

Literary Arts: Ravi Shankar, Salvatore Scibona, Leslie McGrath

Traditional Arts: Maggie Holtzberg, Rita Moonsammey, Lynne Williamson

RYAN BENNETT FELLOW IN THE PERFORMING ARTS



^ Production of *Ramblin' Round*. Photo by Jack Carroll

In concert with the Maine Film Office and the Department of Economic Development, the Maine Arts Commission has been working on Maine film incentives as a way to entice more feature film production in a state that offers beautiful site selections and houses communities that could benefit from the economic boost a movie production would bring. That is why it is so timely and poignant that the 2010 awardee in the performing arts is a young filmmaker from Pittsfield, Maine, Ryan Bennett.

Ryan was born and raised in Maine and graduated from Vancouver Film School's 12-month film production program in 2005. He has just completed his first short film for competition, *Ramblin' Round*.

Focused mainly on postproduction, Ryan has worked as a dailies colorist collaborating with some of the industry's most talented cinematographers in Bojan Bazelli (*The Ring*, *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*) and John Toll (*Braveheart*, *It's Complicated*). He has also colored commercials for advertising agencies from BBDO to Crispin Porter.

Ryan's filmmaking influencers are vast and eclectic, and to his great good fortune, he has had the chance to not only meet but also work with some of those influencers personally.

Ryan is currently developing his first feature film, *Ramblin' Round*, a feature version of the aforementioned short.

"Every form of storytelling has its time and place, whether it's through music, the stage, paintings or great literature. Today that medium is film, and a great film is a combination of all these forms of storytelling. Its ability to evoke emotion is like nothing else I've experienced in my life.

"The challenge of incorporating all of the elements, the various hats you're forced to wear in order to simply get your art made, is a source of both pride and frustration. The medium allows you to communicate a single thought or an entire world of thoughts. It allows you to share an entire phi-

losophy with individuals and groups of people you have never met, with the hope of making them want, making them dream and, above all, making them think.

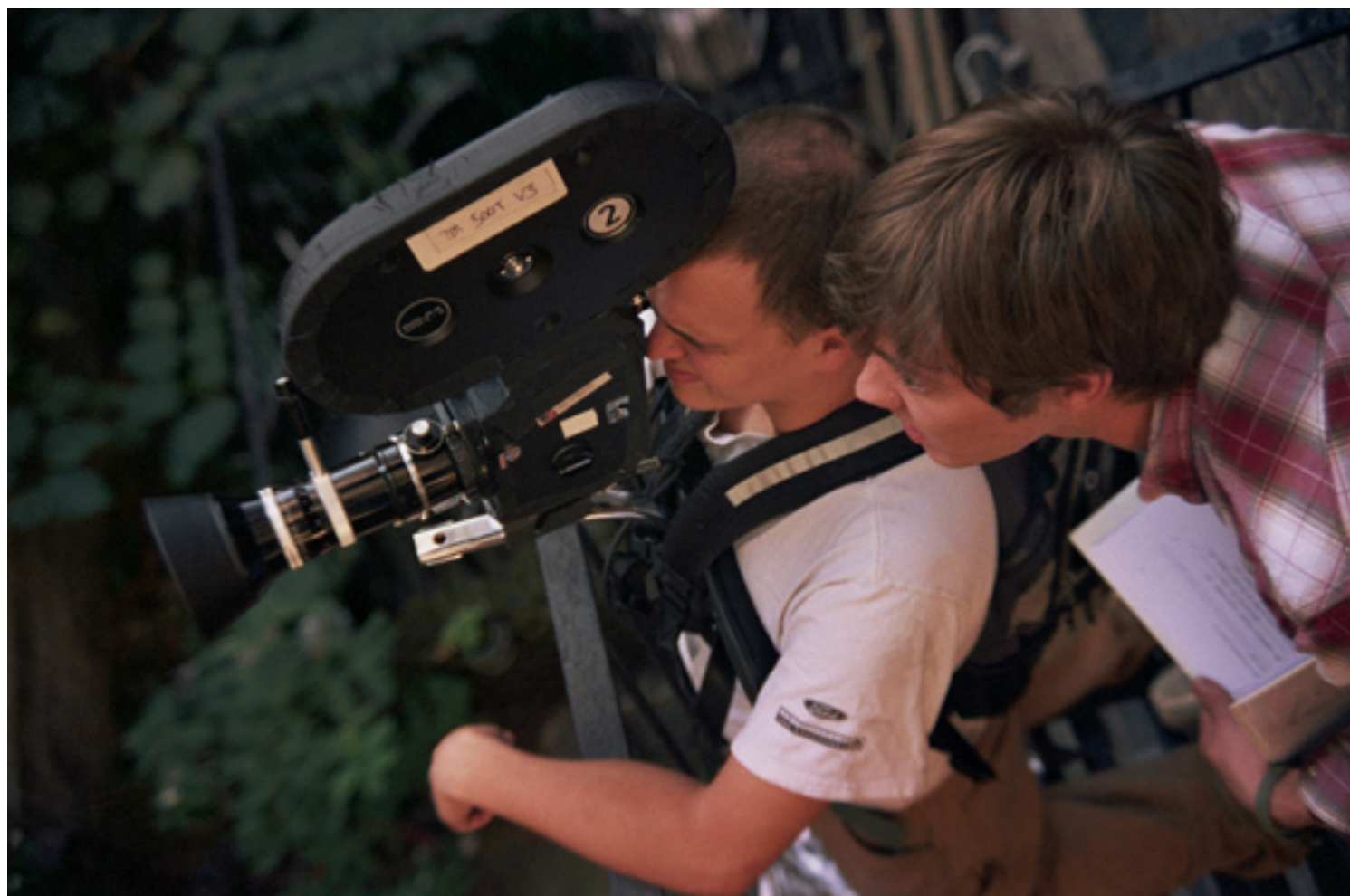
"The arts have always been an elusive term in my life. Growing up in central Maine, I had very little knowledge that such a community existed. The general community of Maine, a neighbor, a friend's parents, a store owner, this I'm familiar with. I've been making films in and around central Maine since I was 15 years old, and I have never met anyone not willing to lend a helping hand.

"I am very proud to be from a state where the Arts Commission recognizes a motion picture, albeit short, as a piece of art. It is truly the greatest compliment a filmmaker can receive, and for it to come from my home means more to me personally than I could ever hope to articulate.

"However, not so hard to communicate is what the fellowship means for me. One of the many unique things about the art of filmmaking is that it relies on so many variables. The creation of a film is not as simple as picking up a piece of paper and a pencil, or a canvas and some oil paints. Filmmaking is all the

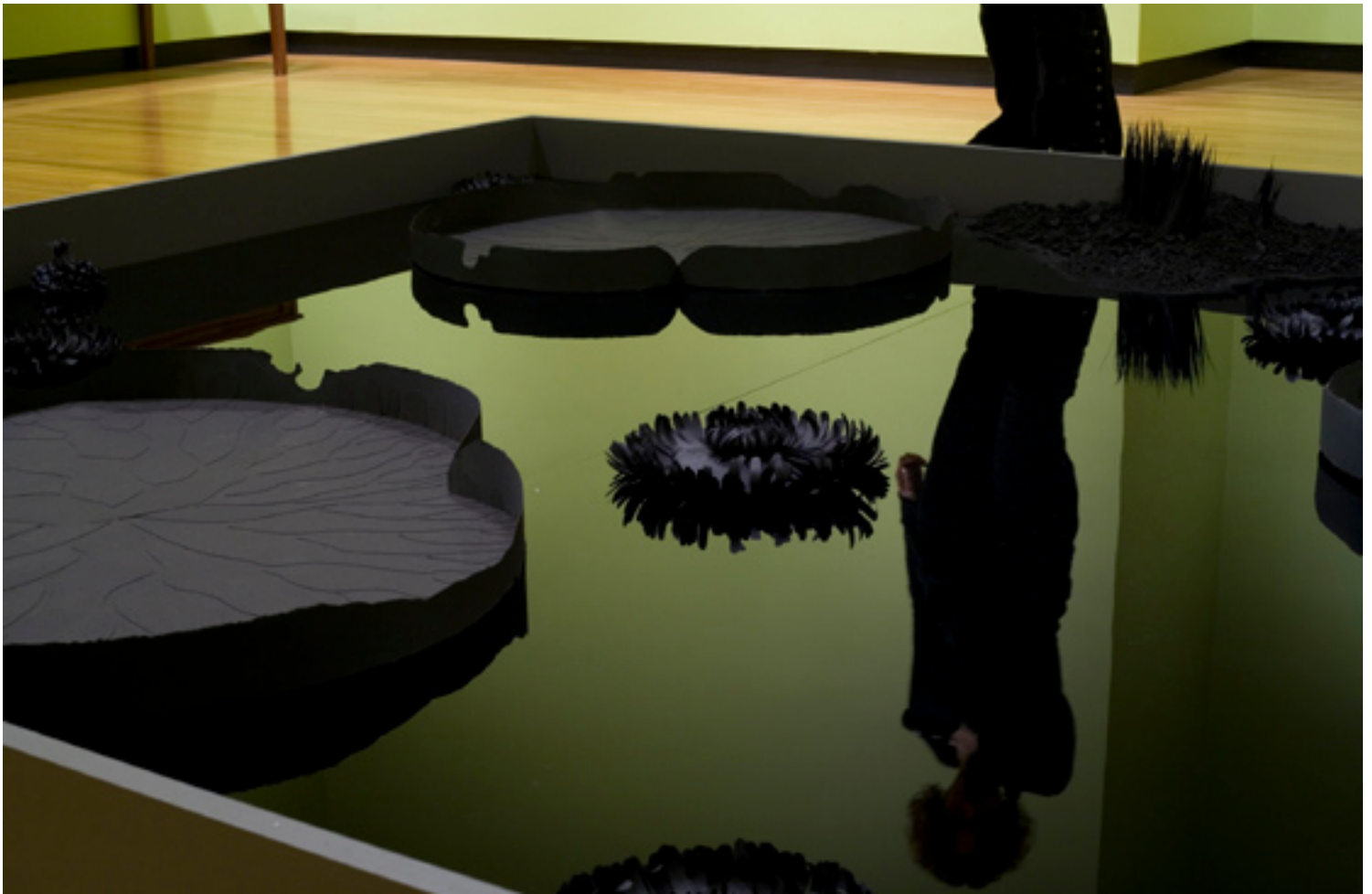
art forms rolled up into one, and due to this, the art of filmmaking is in many ways a catch-22 for young artists. It's the modern-day art; it demands more out of the individual artist than any other art form.

"What the fellowship means for me is that I now have the means to purchase and develop the film stock that I need in order to shoot the feature film version of *Ramblin' Round*; one of the variables can now be crossed out. With the presentation of this award, the Maine Arts Commission has brought the next project that much closer to reality."



▲ Production of *Ramblin' Round*. Photo by Pete Howell

LAUREN FENSTERSTOCK FELLOW IN THE VISUAL ARTS



▲ **Parterre**, Lauren Fensterstock, Installation at Bowdoin College Museum of Art 2008, Courtesy of Aucocisco Gallery

Lauren Fensterstock's sublime exhibit at the Bowdoin College Museum of Art was the centerpiece and convincing argument for her selection as the 2010 Maine Arts Commission Individual Artist awardee in the visual arts. The juror's only lament—give us more—fill the room!

How does Maine attract such fine artists? Lauren explains.

"I chose to live in Maine nine years ago after finding the memory of a weekend visit unshakeable. I quickly found that my story was not unique among artists who for generations have come seeking reverie in Maine's ruggedly sublime beauty. But I can't say that it was Maine's coast or woods that inspired

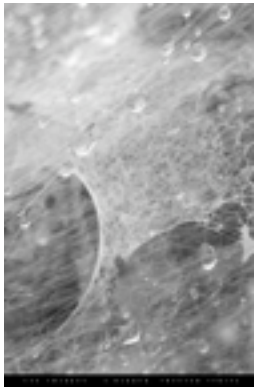
my move. Quite the contrary, it was Portland's 19th-century industrial brick cityscape with its vibrant urban art and restaurant scene that captured my affection. I moved to Maine for the culture. Still, the innate power of Maine was unavoidable. I've absorbed the austere quiet of nine long Maine winters; I sensed the undercurrent of focus and sincere contemplation—sometimes rooted in survival—that pervades the state. Maine's deep snow and plunging temperatures inspire my full-bodied acknowledgement of nature, of site, of time: three qualities that are now central to my work."

What is the impact of such an award, and what does it say about Maine's commitment to and honoring of the individual artist?

"I am both humbled and honored to receive this fellowship from the Maine Arts Commission. It is an incredible affirmation that means so much to me. This fellowship will help me to realize my dream of working on a larger, more significant and more confident scale. For the first time, I will be able to invest the time and purchase the materials necessary to bring my ideas into being in their fullest uncompromised form.

"Knowing that I have the support of my community—expressed through a state agency—fills me with a sense of purpose and duty. I am truly inspired by a community that chooses to come together to sustain the vision and power of individual voices."

LEE SHARKEY FELLOW IN THE LITERARY ARTS



^ [ABOVE LEFT] Cover of Lee Sharkey's *A Darker, Sweeter String* [RIGHT] Lee Sharkey. Photo: Al Bersbach

There was no question in the mind of the three jurors who selected this year's Literary Arts Fellow that Lee Sharkey was the clear pick. Her range of poetic choices, her marriage of traditional and contemporary, hip without trying too hard, Sharkey's poems exemplified the best of what's happening in poetry today. Her voice is vatic, like Eliot's quartets.

In response to the receipt of this recognition, Sharkey writes, "I love living in Maine because the ratio of trees to people is just about right here. Most of my days begin with a walk through the woods behind my house to a stream that winds through a freshwater marsh, home to moose, deer, beavers, owls, herons, ducks, snapping turtles, the occasional fisher and an intricate cyclical display of wildflowers. I understand myself in relation to this small corner of the earth, where every day is a different season. Walking it, breathing it in, clears out the cant of political discourse, stills the mind's

chatter. It seeds fresh language and mulches that language with silence. It prepares me, and my poems, to set forth again into the troubled world we humans make.

"Most people I know in Maine similarly ground their lives in the natural world, and that has influenced, I'm sure, the value system we aspire to live by here, which begins with the premise that we are inseparable from the earth and those we coexist with on it. That coexistence depends quite literally at this time of chronic war, economic breakdown and environmental crisis on humankind's ability to reconceive almost every aspect of our lives. Of course, this is what artists do on a daily basis. For me, that reenvisioning often entails wrestling with the violence we do ourselves and others. My most recent book, *A Darker, Sweeter String*, is a charting of the post-9/11 psychic and political landscape. The manuscript I'm working on, tentatively titled

Calendars of Fire, envisions 'a song / that will swarm like white dragonflies / across the checkpoint' that separates peoples, people and the masculine and feminine aspects of ourselves, that sets them against each other. It moves uneasily toward a difficult 'we,' a transformation from dominance to mutuality.

"How fortunate we are in Maine to have a vibrant arts community and an Arts Commission that by supporting artists fosters the arts that sustain communities across the state. The Individual Artist Fellowship will allow me to spend time at a writer's colony finishing the new manuscript, and for that I'm grateful. I'm also grateful for the affirmation the award gives of the value of my work to others; it completes the cycle that begins in isolation with no assurance that what I labor to bring forth will come to anything."

DAVID C. WOLFE FELLOW IN THE TRADITIONAL ARTS



▲ (LEFT) David C. Wolfe in his Portland studio (RIGHT) Iron hand press in David's studio

Merrymount, Riverside, Stinehour and Anthoensen, these presses are a testimony to the great New England tradition of bookmaking and letterpress printers. Letterpress printing, a technology developed in the mid-15th century, is set from individual pieces of handmade metal type and then printed directly from the type.

This year's Traditional Arts Fellowship winner, David C. Wolfe, is part of this tradition: "I'm a link in a line of skilled craftsmen who have kept the ideas of fine printing alive. My mentor and teacher at Anthoensen Press in Portland was a man named Harry Milliken, who had been with Anthoensen for 40

years. Many of my skills learned from Harry are at the core of my work. But more than that, I learned a sense of careful workmanship and pride in the quality of whatever I do."

Recognized for his superlative skill and passion for his work, Wolfe continues to teach a whole new generation in his Portland-based studio. "Maine as a place has a tremendous influence on me as an artist. The cycle of the seasons, the influx of people who come and go and the history of the state are all elements that form the work I do. I decided early in my career that I wanted to live and work here. I planned to work other jobs until the

'printmaking scene' grew enough for me to support myself. I realized after a while that I needed to create the 'scene' myself. I have worked diligently to make work and to teach others about the historic process I use. My studio is a hub of activity in the printing arts in the northeastern part of the USA. This area has long been a center for printing, and I feel I'm part of that tradition. Government support of any individuals working in traditional media allows us to enrich our current culture with what has come before our time. What we put into our culture now grows exponentially in the future. This grant will help me this year, but more than that, it tells me 'Maine' wants me here." ■

TRADITIONAL ARTS



▲ Sheering sheep on Flat Island, Maine. Photo courtesy of Susan Barrett Merrill

The Traditional Arts Apprenticeship program brings master artists together with apprentices for intensive instruction. Whether it is in the studio or at the kitchen table, this year's master traditional artists artfully balance skill, vision and tradition. Such mastery involves more than just obtaining technical proficiency. It also calls for an understanding of materials, place and community practices.

Master Penobscot basketmaker Paula Thorne will be teaching her apprentice, Emily Bell, how to collect and prepare the brown ash tree for basketmaking. Known as the "basket tree," brown ash provides the best natural material for making splints, the pliable strips of wood used for weaving baskets. According to Thorne, selecting and preparing "your materials" is one of the most difficult parts of mastering traditional basketry.

Master artist Susan Barrett Merrill is a sixth-generation Maine weaver and knitter from Brooksville.

Merrill will be teaching apprentice Barbara Egan how to weave wool weft into a linen warp called "linsey-woolsey" and spinning wool "in the grease."

Part of her long-standing family tradition includes shearing sheep on Flat and Nash Islands off the coast of Maine. Merrill explains: "These clean wild fleeces provide much of the wool that I use in my own work.... For spinners and weavers in Maine communities that have access to naturally clean fleeces such as those from island flocks, the preservation of the technique of spinning in the grease

will keep the awareness of its advantages alive in the spinning and weaving community."

For Traditional Arts Fellowship winner David Wolfe, an acknowledged master printer from Portland, his work is part of "an important link to contemporary graphic design, printing, typography and web design. It is the basis of all these fields. They have grown from the roots of letterpress printing."

Once an apprentice at Anthoensen Press in Portland, Wolfe now teaches a whole new generation:

"Maine has been a center for printing for a long time due to its connection to the paper industry.... My continued passion for printing has allowed me to create a center for printing arts in Portland. I rent a 2,000-square-foot studio that is home to 15 or more antique presses and composition machines. All of them are used on a regular basis. My studio is not a museum."

NEW FUNDING PROGRAM FOR TRADITIONAL ARTISTS

In order to continue to support the work of traditional artists throughout Maine, the Maine Arts Commission is launching a new funding program called Celebrate Traditional Arts, which offers direct support for traditional artists in a variety of community settings including festivals, gatherings, fairs, museums, tours and other community events. Priority will be given to nonprofit organizations whose primary mission is to sustain and present traditional culture. Organizations are eligible to apply for up to \$1,500 in artists' fees.

For further information, please contact Kathleen Mundell at mainetraditionalarts@gmail.com or call 207/236-6741.

2009-2010 TRADITIONAL ARTS APPRENTICESHIPS

Greg Boardman, Fiddler
Hannah Rodrigue, Apprentice

Thomas Cote, Acadian Woodcarver
Ellysabeth S. Bencivenga, Apprentice

Normand Gagnon, Quebecois Accordionist
Michel Giasson, Apprentice

Susan Barrett Merrill, Weaver & Spinner
Barbara Egan, Apprentice

Paula Thorne, Penobscot Basketmaker
Emily Bell, Apprentice



^ Susan Barrett Merrill spinning wool. Photo courtesy of Susan Barrett Merrill



▲ Marion Stocking. Photo by Ann Arbor

REMEMBERING MARION STOCKING

"Maybe this will help you out," Marion Stocking said as she handed me a poster citing the pitfalls of using the passive voice. In writing, the passive voice is often associated with wordiness, confusion and, worse still, bureaucratic evasiveness.

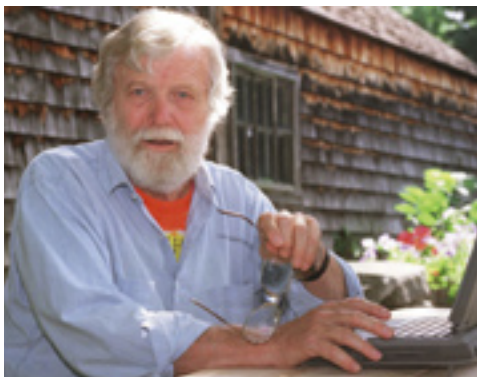
Marion was not a fan of anything passive, especially voices. The consummate editor, writer and lover of both the written and spoken word, Marion Stocking was the chief editor and guiding light of the *Beloit Poetry Journal* for decades. In 1993, she became the chair of the newly formed Community Arts Committee of the Maine Arts Commission.

Marion did help me out immensely. I didn't know it, but at the time I was a bit of a lone wolf running the Maine Arts Commission's Traditional Arts program and community arts programs. Among other things, Marion taught me how to take a good idea and develop it so that others would listen. The idea was called Discovery Research, a new way of working in communities on a local level. Together with Peter Simmons, the agency's then-assistant director, we developed a program that trained community people to identify their own cultural assets and then build on their discoveries. This approach was a shift away from competitively awarding grants and toward funding entire communities, asking all interests to work cooperatively. It was also a move away from the fragmented approach of importing culture "from away" to a more integrated approach guided by local cultural perspectives.

Our first Discovery Research site was Hancock County. To kick things off, Marion, Peter and I called a town meeting on the arts at the Ellsworth Library, and on an icy night in January, more than 90 people showed up to share their ideas about what they valued about their place. Some talked about the boatbuilding traditions and fishing while others spoke eloquently about the beauty of the landscape and its influence on their work. I realized that most people came because Marion personally invited them, either calling them or sending out one of her famous typewritten postcards.

From there, the program went on to Lewiston, and eventually Discovery Research would be conducted in over 40 communities throughout Maine. Today, Discovery Research is still regarded as an innovative model for asset-based cultural planning. And many of the ideas this program championed, including local control, cultural sustainability and honoring a sense of place, continue to be worth standing up for. The only difference is that Marion Stocking is no longer with us. I will miss her. Maine has lost a wonderful spirit and a great champion of the arts and the environment.

—Kathleen Mundell



▲ Edward D. Ives. Photo: Kevin Bennett, *Bangor Daily News*

REMEMBERING EDWARD D. IVES

Edward D. "Sandy" Ives is the subject of numerous tributes from folklorists across the country as they mark his passing. Ives passed away August 1 at his home in Orono. Born in 1925, Ives began his teaching career teaching English Literature. While teaching, he supplemented his income singing traditional ballads, inspired by the performances of Richard Dyer Bennet and Tex Fletcher. These performances led him to collect and

study Maine and Maritime ballads and traditional tales sung in lumber camps. He is perhaps best known for his studies of Joe Scott and the satirical balladeer Larry Gorman, as well as his research into the culture of Maine's woodsmen. As Ives' study of traditional songs included the cultural context, he was invited to join the Anthropology Department, at the University of Maine, where he taught for forty years and founded the Maine Folklife Center and the Northeast Folklore Archives, a rich treasure of folklife and oral history materials from northeastern United States. ■

AMERICAN MASTERPIECES



- < **[LEFT] Pilobolus.** One of the true pioneers of American dance, Pilobolus is recognized internationally for a body of work that thrills audiences with ingenious choreography, daring physicality and raw athleticism, spiced with the sensuality of the human body and a hefty dose of humor. Photographer: John Kane; Courtesy of Portland Ovations
- ^ **[ABOVE RIGHT] Dayton Contemporary Dance Company.** Recognized as holding the world's largest repertoire of works by African-American choreographers, DCDC brings to Portland glorious, powerful and intelligent dance that engages the human spirit. Photographer: Andy Snow; Courtesy of Portland Ovations

The National Endowment for the Arts American Masterpieces: Three Centuries of Artistic Genius program was developed roughly five years ago "to introduce Americans to the best of their cultural and artistic legacy through touring, local presentations and arts education programs that will reach all American people." The Maine Arts Commission has offered

the program at the state level as a means to support the state's largest art organizations — those with budgets over \$500,000 — a demographic somewhat underserved by the agency's community-based funding. Since 2007 a select number of major grants have been awarded for exhibitions, performances and residencies that feature American master works, movements or artists.

This year seven awards were made, totaling \$120,000, presenting masterpieces in American

musical performance, musical theater, dance, craft, visual arts and theater.

PORTLAND OVATIONS BRINGS AMERICAN MASTERS OF DANCE TO MAINE

Aimeé Petrin, Executive Director, Portland Ovations

"Movement never lies. It is a barometer telling the state of the soul's weather to all who can read it."
—Martha Graham

Maine is a "dance state." It is home to the internationally recognized Bates Dance Festival and in its past supported a professional dance company, Ram Island Dance. Portland Ovations brought its first dance event in 1939, going on to bring such greats as Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Paul Taylor Dance Company, Martha Graham Dance Company and Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, among others. Dance studios dedicated to ballet, jazz, modern and hip-hop keep dancers of all ages and levels engaged in the art of dance.

Portland Ovations collaborates with Bates Dance Festival and numerous dance studios to bring the exhilaration, beauty and innovation of dance to our shared community. However, even with these efforts, Maine and the region remain underserved in terms of dance programming and education. Support from the Maine Arts Commission and its American Masterpieces grant program, funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, makes great advances in strengthening the connection between Maine audiences and dance.

Contemporary dance, like jazz, is one of the few art forms that the United States can claim as its own. Dance in America has undergone extraordinary evolution and diversification since its inception little more than a century ago. Illustrating the artistic excellence, vitality and richness of American contemporary dance, during 2009-2010 Portland Ovations brings to Maine three exciting American dance companies with strikingly different aesthetics: Pilobolus, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company and Aspen Santa Fe Ballet. These companies were chosen not only for their artistry but for a body of work that enables Portland Ovations to move offstage and into the community to explore the choreographic legacies, styles, techniques and themes presented.

Meaningful interaction between artists and the community is crucial for sustaining audiences in any art form. For contemporary dance, which can often be shrouded in a feeling of mystery, it is vital. While in Maine, each of the Portland Ovations' presented companies will host community dance master classes for Maine-based dance artists and



▲ [TOP] **Dayton Contemporary Dance Company.** Recognized as holding the world's largest repertoire of works by African-American choreographers, DCDC brings to Portland glorious, powerful and intelligent dance that engages the human spirit. Photographer: Andy Snow; Courtesy of Portland Ovations [BOTTOM] **Pilobolus.** One of the true pioneers of American dance, Pilobolus is recognized internationally for a body of work that thrills audiences with ingenious choreography, daring physicality and raw athleticism, spiced with the sensuality of the human body and a hefty dose of humor. Photographer: John Kane; Courtesy of Portland Ovations

participate in post-performance talkbacks with the audience. Dayton Contemporary Dance Company will lead a professional development workshop for educators interested in learning how to integrate dance and creative movement into their classrooms and curricula. Pre-performance lectures with Maine dance scholars will examine the importance of the works presented and the place each company holds in the firmament of contemporary American dance. Additional resources, such as Portland Ovations' informative Dance Primer, an educational guide for all ages and dance levels, will be available on our website.

Over the past several years, Portland Ovations has seen tremendous growth in its dance programming. With the community's support, Portland Ovations has expanded its dance offerings from one annual iconic presentation to three dance events per year. We've found our audiences enthusiastic, responsive and curious. As incredibly pleased as we are by the passionate Maine dance audiences, even with full houses, ticket sales alone do not come close to

covering the cost of presenting dance. Extraordinary production expenses and the costs associated with hosting and caring for a large company over several days can make presenting dance prohibitive. Support by the Maine Arts Commission makes this in-depth quality programming possible for Portland Ovations and our community. It is our hope that with such an expansive series replete with engaging and interactive activities, we will nurture current lovers of dance while bringing new members of our community to the power of the human body in motion.

GEORGE CRUMB: EIGHT DECADES

Pulitzer- and Grammy-winning composer George Crumb is a true American master. His compositions, known for their striking originality, explorations of unusual timbres, use of extended techniques and purposeful amplification and theatricality, have vastly expanded the vocabulary of contemporary music worldwide.

The Maine Arts Commission's American Masterpieces grant made it possible for the Bowdoin International Music Festival to celebrate Crumb's life's work through a residency that included five concerts, a public master class and one-on-one sessions with 10 emerging composers. The concerts presented several of Crumb's seminal works ("Voice of the Whale"; "Makrokosmos"; "Eleven Echoes of Autumn, 1965"; and others), works by several of his former students and the world premiere of his "Sun and Shadow (Spanish Songbook II)."

Musicians performing his works included festival artistic director Lewis Kaplan; clarinetist Igor Bergelman, winner of the 2000 Avery Fischer Award; Peter Basquin, winner of the 1975 Montreal International Piano Competition; Joshua Smith, principal flute of the Cleveland Orchestra; pianist Emma Tahmizian, prizewinner of the Schumann International and van Cliburn competitions; Muneko Otani, first violin of the Cassatt Quartet; soprano Ann Crumb; festival faculty; and some of the festival's top students. ■



▲ **[ABOVE] Pilobolus.** One of the true pioneers of American dance, Pilobolus is recognized internationally for a body of work that thrills audiences with ingenious choreography, daring physicality and raw athleticism, spiced with the sensuality of the human body and a hefty dose of humor. Photographer: John Kane; Courtesy of Portland Ovations

THE ARTISTS IN MAINE COMMUNITIES IS CELEBRATING ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY WITH THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THIS YEAR'S GRANTS!



^ **[ABOVE LEFT]** Janet Badger and Becky Buyers-Basso interview Charlene Allen, island resident, for the Great Cranberry Islander Portrait Project; photographed by Tara Jones; Courtesy of The Great Cranberry Island Historical Society **[RIGHT]** Janet Badger works at her press in Bangor, Maine; photographed by Becky Buyers-Basso; Courtesy of The Great Cranberry Island Historical Society

Artists in Maine Communities grants assist arts organizations, schools and other community groups to develop collaborative projects that employ Maine artists and provide artistic programs to Maine communities, schools or families. This is the only grant program offered by the Maine Arts Commission that supports activities from all of the agency's programs, including arts in education, contemporary arts, community arts, public art and

traditional arts; pays artists to work; and builds communities and teaches citizens by requiring collaboration on all fronts.

The well-regarded program is ready to evolve after 10 years, and new guidelines are being developed that will solidify the role of the arts organization at the core of the project and encourage innovation in the definition of community. However, since 2000, the Maine Arts Commission has made 150 grants totaling \$1,041,058 to "old friends" as well as new and emerging organizations, including awards to arts groups, social service organizations, libraries, school districts, tribal governments and others.

A new grantee, The Great Cranberry Island Historical Society, was awarded an Artists in Maine Communities grant in collaboration with the Heliker-LaHotan Foundation, Inc., for the Great Cranberry Islander Portrait Project. This collaboration will facilitate a community-centered arts project involving two established Maine artists, Bangor printmaker Janet Badger and Bar Harbor photojournalist Rebecca Buyers-Basso, and the year-round community of Great Cranberry Island, which now numbers fewer than 40 residents. Working in linoleum, etching and mezzotint, Badger will create fine art portraits of some of the islanders. Photojournalist Buyers-Basso will interview Badger's subjects, obtaining oral portraits and other biographical information.

Janet Badger received her BA at the University of Texas at Austin in 1982. She has over 25 years of experience in printmaking and has shown her work extensively in the United States as well as internationally in Canada, Russia and England. Rebecca Buyers-Basso holds a BA in journalism and human ecology. She has written articles for the *Bar Harbor Times*, features for the *Mount Desert Islander* and received an award from the Maine Press Association for Best Newspaper Series.

The portrait project will create a permanent record of a portion of the residents of Great Cranberry Island for generations to come, preserving a community's history and people through the arts.

Museum L-A has been recognized for excellence three times in the past decade. The current Artists in Maine Communities grant will enable Museum L-A to realize its vision for the exhibit *Portraits and Voices: Brickyard Roads*, chronicling L-A's rich history of brick

making over a century and beyond. Through the grant, Museum L-A commissions important interpretive art from three Maine artists, cementing the ability to connect generations and industries.

Ray Michaud's painting is used to depict our legacy in brick. Jacob Bluestone's photos showcase the landscape of the pits. The brick exhibit comes alive through funding with a cultural laboratory of sorts as artist Catherine Bechstein installs a sculpture that "weaves" a carpet of brick, where visitors are encouraged to experience and add to the social fiber of our community.

ART: BRICK BY BRICK

Christina Bechstein will never again be able to look at a building made of brick in the same way – not after meeting some of the men and women who made the bricks and designing a piece of art intended to honor them.

Brick making was once an important industry in Lewiston-Auburn. At the industry's peak, there were 32 brickyards in the area. Bechstein is one of the artists collaborating with Museum L-A in its current exhibit *Portraits and Voices: Brickyard Roads*. This exhibit celebrates the brick-making industry and brick makers in Lewiston-Auburn and is funded in part by the Maine Arts Commission's Artists in Maine Communities grant. Bechstein describes her work as a "carpet" of bricks that is in progress, laid out on a platform in the current Museum L-A space in Lewiston. Some of the bricks have words or phrases carved into them. The text comes from oral histories that were gathered as part of the exhibit. It's not the first time Bechstein has collaborated with Museum L-A. She also worked on the *Social Fabric* exhibit, which involved working with thousands of discarded shoelaces from the old Bates Mill.

Bechstein took the concept from Museum-L-A's director, Rachel DeGrossellier, who envisioned the



^ Artist Christina Bechstein at Museum L-A



^ **[TOP]** Dennis Brickyard, 1927 **[BOTTOM]** Key words and phrases are carved into the bricks as part of the artwork that will be installed in the new building for Museum-L-A

bricks paving a road or a path to our past. Bechstein also wanted to demonstrate visually that while bricks are created incrementally, they can fill large spaces. She says she's been surprised by how meaningful it has been to collaborate with Museum L-A. She says she enjoys collaboration, because the outcome is always richer, and the work is better. At the ceremony opening the exhibit, to which the former brick makers were invited, she says she felt she was in the company of other artists. She watched with interest as some of the brick makers picked up some of the bricks in the "carpet" and examined them. Bechstein says she was extremely relieved to see the brick makers respond positively to the piece. "I think I was much more nervous than if another artist or curator were judging my work. I really wanted them to think that it was okay, and I felt like they understood it."

The collaboration does not stop with Bechstein and Museum L-A. Bechstein is quick to point out that the work is unfinished and will need to be added to by others in order to be whole. The platform or "carpet" of bricks will be filled out with more bricks that the community will carve. That may include images as well as text. At the end of the year, when the exhibit comes down, the bricks will be stored until Museum L-A moves into its new facility on the riverfront. The bricks may become part of a wall façade or part of the floor in that building. Bechstein hopes to utilize the labor and ingenuity of past workers to teach lessons and provide guidance for the future.

And what does Bechstein think the work says about community?

"I think that this work, at its heart, is about community; it's about honoring the workers, but it also hasn't been finished by me. It needs to be added to by others in order for it to be whole, and because of that, I hope that the work in some way says community matters and that community is really needed...in order for us to all move forward." ■

CULTURAL FACILITIES



^ [ABOVE LEFT] Landscaped walkway; artist rendering by Lara Cannon; Courtesy of Wintergreen Arts Center [RIGHT] New storefront; artist rendering by Lara Cannon; Courtesy of Wintergreen Arts Center

The Cultural Facilities Accessibility grant provides professional Maine arts organizations financial support, through facilities bonds passed by Maine citizens in both 2005 and 2007, for major construction and renovation projects and/or technological improvements.

The Maine Arts Commission seized the opportunity to provide bricks-and-mortar support for arts organizations large and small to come into full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Funds have been awarded to remove physical barriers, through refitting entrances, financing accessible

bathrooms and improving gallery space, and to provide programmatic assistance through technology such as assistive listening for performance spaces. This allowed the agency an important means to address its goal of providing full access to the arts for all people. In 2009, in an attempt to get significant monies out to the field during an economic downturn, the Maine Arts Commission made adjustments to the program, giving applicants the opportunity to apply for up to \$25,000 and reducing the obligated match to one dollar for every three dollars provided by the grant. Additionally, the program was no longer restricted to organizations that owned their own facility but also offered funds to organizations with long-term leases. Wintergreen Arts Center is just such a story.

The Cultural Facilities Accessibility grant means the world to us at Wintergreen Arts Center. News

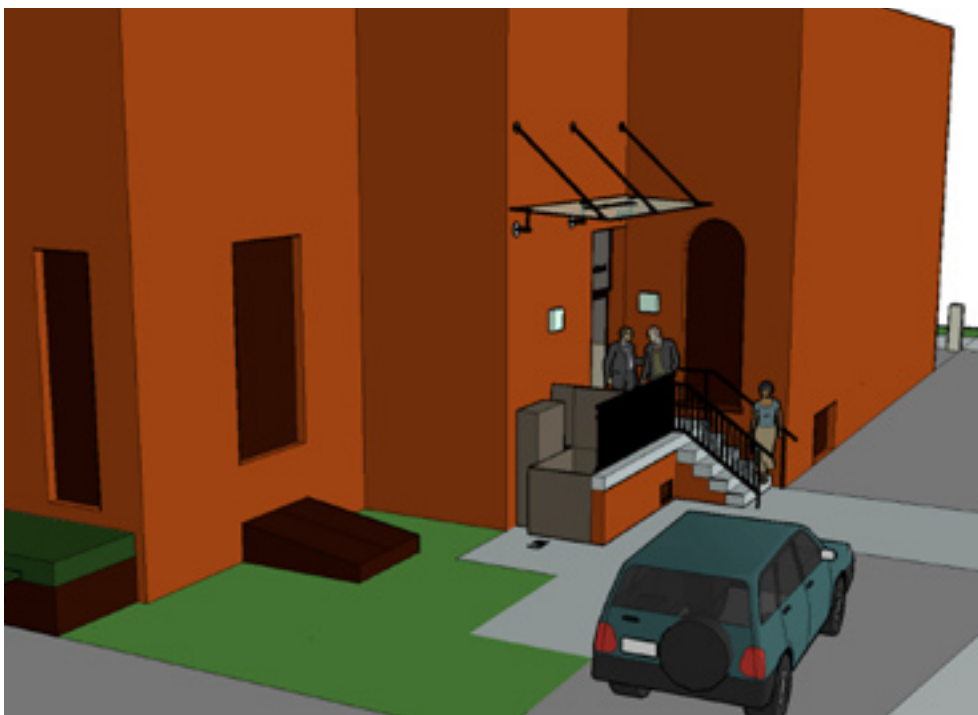
of the grant award brought us over the halfway mark in our capital campaign to raise \$106,834 to transform a historic building in downtown Presque Isle into a creative, vibrant and fully accessible community arts center — and enabled us to start renovations ahead of schedule in August!

After our founding in 2006, the Wintergreen Arts Center quickly outgrew our initial location at the Aroostook Centre Mall. Our children's art education programs, community events, Saturday Open Studios, field trips, birthday parties and adult classes had us bursting at our seams. Recently, thanks to a generous donation of a 10-year lease featuring free rent and utilities from a downtown landlord, we were offered the opportunity to move to a more permanent location in the heart of downtown Presque Isle.

The building offers historic charm and a central location. Step inside and visitors are greeted with a flood of natural light, river views, wood floors, tin ceilings and room to expand in the future. Yet years of vacancy have left their mark. It is in dire need of repair and is center stage in the feeling of blight in the downtown area. With this grant, Wintergreen will be able to implement our extensive plans to restore the interior and build a fully furnished art studio, a gallery space for children and adults, a "Poet's Corner," a small stage called the "PlayHouse", and a fully accessible bathroom and entryway. New programs, such as comprehensive after-school art classes in collaboration with Presque Isle Recreation and Parks Department and a year-round Visiting Artist program slated to begin when we conclude our capital campaign and reopen our center in late 2009, are also in development.

"At Wintergreen Arts Center, we have seen firsthand what the vision and commitment of a group of volunteers can do in our community. Wintergreen is about enjoying the arts, but it is also about encouraging downtown revitalization and creating an active community network that encourages innovation, creativity and the entrepreneurial spirit. The next Jessica McClintock or Stephen King may already be a student at Wintergreen Arts twisting her pipe cleaners into a new line of clothing or editing his first short film!"

Lara Cannon, Executive Director
Wintergreen Arts Center



▲ [ABOVE] Architectural renderings by Ted Oldham

Greater Portland Landmarks' (GPL) grant will provide universal access for its new Center for Architecture and Preservation located at the Safford House at 93 High Street in Portland. The \$25,000 Cultural Facilities Accessibility grant will go toward GPL's project to construct a lift that will provide full access to the first floor at the Spring Street entrance to the building. "We are looking forward to welcoming all members of the community to this landmark building and to GPL's unique library, resources, activities and expanded programming in architecture, design and preservation," said Hilary Bassett, GPL's Executive Director.

Founded in 1964, GPL has championed the connection between Portland's authentic built environment, its distinctive architecture, its high quality of life and its strong economic base. By building awareness of this connection, GPL has helped protect the character of Portland's historic seaport while inspiring millions of dollars of investment through the rehabilitation of historic buildings and neighborhoods. The Center for Architecture and Preservation will serve as an important community resource for information, programs, workshops and discussions that explore the role that architecture, design and preservation play in history, in current development and in our community's particular sense of place.

Addressing issues of access up front ensures a welcoming presence to the entire community and encourages broad participation by a diverse audience.

The staff and board at the Eastern Frontier Educational Foundation, a well-hidden, pristine artist residency site off Jonesport in Washington County, were delighted to learn of its financial gift from the Maine Arts Commission to build accessible facilities for the Norton Island Residency program. The program, which just marked its 10th year, hosts an international community of artists, writers and composers invited to spend two weeks a year (three residencies run every summer) at this beautiful refuge where they can focus on their work. The program is rustic — small cabins in the woods on an island in Downeast Maine. Yet with the aid of the Maine Arts Commission's grant, architects have designed a system of wheelchair-accessible

"These efforts to retrofit a remote, rustic arts site express the value and impact of the Cultural Fa-

Sadly, this will be the last year that the Cultural Facilities Accessibility grant will be offered. In the seven years that this and other funds have provided support for access efforts (the other grant being the Governor's Awards for Arts Accessibility),

the Maine Arts Commission has granted \$590,668 to 35 arts organizations in a wide variety of Maine communities, spanning from Houlton and Eastport to Ogunquit and Dover-Foxcroft and everywhere in between. The agency continues its commitment to access throughout all programs and, with its Arts Accessibility Task Force, will seek funds to embark on several pilot projects in arts and aging and artist health care in 2010. ■



HOLD THAT DATE!

THE JUICE CONFERENCE IS COMING!



The Maine Arts Commission is helping the Maine economy stay "juiced," and leading that charge is newly installed Maine Arts Commission member Skip Bates. Bates, who also heads up the Midcoast Magnet organization, is forming partnerships across the state, including one with the Maine Arts Commission, to present this year's Juice Conference on November 13 and 14.

The Juice Conference is an effort to bring different sectors of the economic and social garden of Maine together to network, share ideas and cross-pollinate. "It's easy enough to get the members of any one sector in a room together," says Bates. "Getting different sectors to talk to one another is something else entirely."

Bates says the conference is needed because individuals have become isolated both geographically and professionally. He says various organizations are all working to accomplish the same thing — to make Maine a great place to live and work. He says each of these organizations has something to offer to help each other as they develop an overarching economic development strategy for the state.

The original Juice Conference was held in November of 2007, following up on the 2004 Blaine House Con-

ference on the Creative Economy. The 2007 Juice Conference focused geographically on the mid-coast area, but Bates says this year's conference has more statewide support. The financial sponsors for the conference are the Maine Arts Commission, Bangor Savings Bank, Realize Maine, Build Green Maine, the Department of Economic and Community Development and FairPoint.

One of the exciting elements built into the conference is the structure of its venues — that's venues, plural. While the conference will kick off at the Camden Opera House, workshops and breakout sessions will be held at several locations in Camden — churches, hotels, some public buildings and perhaps even some empty storefronts. The multiple venues will make Camden an object lesson for the concept of "quality of place."

The conference will highlight nationally and internationally known speakers and performers. Among the headliners will be Liz Lerman, of the Liz Lerman Dance Exchange. Lerman is renowned for creating dance pieces in innovative settings, including the Portsmouth Bridge, and groundbreaking dance works performed by a cross-generational company. "Artistic practices," says Lerman, "are essential not just to innovation but to the way communities live and thrive." Lerman plans to perform excerpts from dances *Ferocious Beauty*, about the human genome; *Drift*, about the evolution of a plot of land from farmland to strip mall to supermarket and finally to a house of worship; and a brand-new work about physics and the origin of matter. Lerman will give an address at the conference in addition to performing.

Juice participants will also be treated to a dance performance by East Indian dancer Anirhudda Knight.

THE MAINE ARTS COMMISSION HAS COLLABORATED WITH JUICE CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS TO DEVELOP ARTS-RELATED SESSIONS FOR THE JUICE CONFERENCE. THOSE SESSIONS WILL INCLUDE:

Funders and the Funded — A Symbiotic Relationship. This panel will focus on lesser-known opportunities for funding from state and federal agencies. It will also allow the funders and the funded to talk to each other about what each needs from the other.

Mobilize Maine: Achieving Quality of Place Through Community Action. This session will assist participants in understanding the economic impact of art and culture on the community and provide an update on the Mobilize Maine effort.

Boomers and Beyond: Building a Multigenerational Audience for Your Work. This session will focus on strategies for creating audiences across generations.

Dude! You're on YouTube! Arts Programs for Teens. The first half of this session will include a discussion of four success stories involving arts programs for teens. The second half will include demonstrations.

From Away: The Richness of Multicultural Programming. This session will encourage participants to formulate action plans using progressive notions about multiculturalism for their organizations.

Speed Dating for Fun and Nonprofits. This session will focus on the potential for collaboration and partnerships.

Organizers of the conference hope to create a forum where innovators from different sectors can get together and learn from each other. The conference will include participants from the economic development community as well as the environmental, art, technology and business communities. All of these sectors will be working together to promote innovation and create an economic infrastructure that supports creative activity. Bates says building Maine's innovation network will be one of the major themes of the conference. ■



▲ [ABOVE LEFT] Aniruddha Knight [RIGHT] Liz Lerman. Photo: George Hagegeorge

PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA ARTS TAKE THE STAGE AT THE MAINE ARTS COMMISSION



▲ Olin Arts Center, Bates College

The Maine Arts Commission is broadening its commitment to support the arts in Maine by identifying performing arts and media arts as specific additional areas of focus.

The Maine Arts Commission has always supported performing artists and organizations through grants, such as the annual Fellowship Award, the Artists in Maine Community grant and the Good Idea Grants. However, starting in July the agency assigned Associate Kerstin Gilg the job of promoting the performing arts in a more direct way. Performing arts include theater, dance, music, eco-art,

interventions and other live art forms. The agency has not had an associate devoted to the performing arts in over 10 years; agency staff and the field are looking forward to the increased attention the sector will now receive.

Performing arts productions often rely on collaborations between artists as well as the work of organizers, technicians, crews, marketing staff and others to make a project successful. This can make a performing arts show a high-dollar venture. Because of this, performing arts support often needs to be provided in a more substantial way than funding from individuals. However, the performing arts can be a large job creator as well as having a tremendous cultural impact on a community. The performing arts, in the form of live music or theater in the park, are also tremendously accessible.

These factors prove performing arts to be a benefit in many ways, and because of this the Maine Arts Commission is creating partnerships with other state agencies and creating new grant programs to support this field.

One of the grants Kerstin has created to support the performing arts is the Innovative Production Grant. This grant supports artistic innovation in the production and presentation of performance and/or media work. Innovation can be in the form of materials used, production methods, project concepts, technology integration and/or location use. Innovation can also come in the form of timing, placement of work, means of distribution or manner in which it is presented. The grant will support productions that have some form of public presence or community impact and may fund either a segment of a

production or a production in its entirety. The grant award is up to \$2,000, and the deadline is January 7, 2010. More information can be found at www.MaineArts.com.

Another grant to be offered by the Maine Arts Commission in a partnership with the Maine Community Foundation is the Jane Morrison Memorial Film Fund Grant. The grant supports educational opportunities for filmmakers in the early stages of their career development. The fund is designed to help filmmakers attain instructional guidance and skills. Applicants should identify specific opportunities for educational benefit and be prepared to explain why the experience would help them as filmmakers.

In the past, funds have been used to support attendance at the Summer Film Institute in New York and the Sundance Institute in Utah. The funds can also be applied to film classes at educational institutions, film workshops, seminars and apprenticeships. Preference is given (but not restricted) to those residing in Maine. The grant award is up to \$2,000, and the deadline is January 15, 2010. Again, more information is available at www.MaineArts.com.

Further funding and support for the performing arts come from another of the Maine Arts Commission's partners. The New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) administers a number of programs exclusively for artists and organizations in the New England region. These programs support the presenting and touring of performance work, encourage New England-based composers to share their talents within the region and help New England venues become aware of new or unfamiliar artists or ensembles.

Recently Portland Ovations was given funding support for performances by Cirque Mechanics, Pilobolus and Philip Hamilton. Bates College Olin Arts Center was granted funding support for Dafnis Prieto; and the Bagaduce Chorale, in Brooksville, was given assistance for an Anna Dembska performance.

Presenter Travel Fund. NEFA also provides networking opportunities through Matchbook and NEFA Network as well as an arts database CultureCount. All of these can be found on the NEFA website www.nefa.org.

Kerstin Gilg has also been assigned the task of increasing the Maine Arts Commission's focus of the Media Arts. Support for Media Arts includes moving-image artists who use film, animation and/or video. It also includes artists using computer technology such as net artists, interactive installation artists, interface artists and other creative applications of digital technology. Certain kinds of audio art are also included in this category.

"The way the agency has chosen to define Media Art makes it a very broad field, so I am taking a two-point approach in creating the support mechanisms," said Gilg. "For disciplines like film, video and audio, there are already some very good artists and organizations in the state championing the mediums. I have been working with these existing players to strengthen what is already there. In the case of electronic art and computer work, it is an emerging field, so I am focusing on ways to encourage the exhibition of such works."



INNOVATIVE INDUSTRIES INITIATIVE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE ORONO GETS FUNDING

On June 9, 2009, the Maine Technology Institute announced that it would award a total of \$25 million to 16 projects. The funds would go to help develop technology projects in Maine. Sitting in the company of Bigelow Laboratories and Hodgdon Defense Composites was the University of Maine at Orono, with its project for an Innovative Industries Initiative.

The Innovative Industries Initiative is a project that will fund the construction of a new media innovation, research and development center at the University of Maine. Scheduled to open in June 2011, the center has as its purpose to encourage the culture of innovation within the state. The facilities will be geared for training, research, development and commercialization using new media, modern machines and emerging materials. Available to individuals and businesses, the center will facilitate the ability to take ideas and prototypes through the stages of development to commercialization. The facility will include state-of-the-art video production equipment, a sound production and audio recording studio, a sound stage, a black box production space, an installation space, new media classrooms, prototyping labs and graduate MFA studios for the inter-media program. ■



▲ Cirque Mechanics. Photo: Darin Basile

Opportunities in the New England Presenting and Touring program include Expeditions, Meet the Composer/New England, New England States Touring and

MEET THE NEW MAINEARTS.COM



▲ Screenshots of the new MaineArts.com website

The Maine Arts Commission is proud to announce the launch of its new look for MaineArts.com. The agency's vastly improved website has been a year in the making and will continue to be the central hub for the arts in Maine, providing news and information as well as grant opportunities and support, but now it will

boast an even more user-friendly and visually appealing interface for site visitors.

To make MaineArts.com more user-friendly, search functionality has been added to all of the online services, such as the events calendar. New drop-down menus have improved navigation, and the on-line directory now has a feature that allows users to optimize their search results by either printing a handy booklet or making mailing labels. The directory has also been expanded so that those within the directory can house up to five images plus links to audio and video.

The events calendar now allows users to upload images to accompany their events, and Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds have been added to this and various other sections to ease the retrieval of time-sensitive information from the site.

The improvements to MaineArts.com are too numerous to list here, so see for yourself by logging on today to take full advantage of the services that this website offers the arts community in Maine.



THE CHALLENGES OF PUBLIC ART IN 2009



▲ Jean Shin at SPACE Gallery in Portland. Photo: Bryan Bruchman

The Maine Arts Commission is celebrating its 30th anniversary of the Percent for Art program with a yearlong series of talks addressing issues about public art. The purpose of the series is to inspire and challenge Maine's artists, art professionals and the public to think broadly and deeply about the state of public art in Maine. Through a juried selection process, seven arts organizations were funded by the Maine Arts Commission to present dynamic speakers who, for most of their careers and in very different ways, have made significant contributions to public art.

Are the severe 19th-century cast-bronze statues of military figures placed high on stone pedestals more political than much of the public art being created today? To a degree the answer is "yes," states *New York Times* art critic Ken Johnson in a

July 24, 2009, article titled "Well-Behaved Street Corner Sculpture." He writes, "Outdoor art isn't what it used to be. Once it honored heroic individuals and upheld values that whole populations could embrace. Today, excepting memorials like the Vietnam veterans wall (by Maya Lin), outdoor art serves rather to divert, amuse and comfort."

Johnson acknowledges that issues around public sculpture are much more complicated now than they were in the 19th century when most monuments and memorials were erected. The biggest problem for public sculpture today, observes Johnson, "is the absence of any consensus of values in our pluralistic, multicultural society." While this is a problem, it is one that those involved in public art today readily accept (especially if the alternative is to conform to values such as those placed on public

art by the hegemonic upper-class white civic leaders of the 19th century). However, in embracing this problem, the creation of public art has never been more challenging than it has been in the last 40 or so years. Artists, in addition to creating a work of art, are often charged with the task of identifying who makes up the community for which a commission is intended as well as identifying what constitutes that community's values. This is a process fraught with problems. How can an individual from outside a community enter it and, in a short period of time, understand the people well enough to create a permanent work of art that a broad populace will embrace and proudly call their own?

Attempts to solve this question raise even more questions and conundrums, including Johnson's

claim that public art created and/or commissioned today frequently acquiesces to an audience that prefers art that is easy on the mind. Questions and hypotheses about these issues and more are tackled by the artists and scholars invited to participate in this series of lectures about public art. Amy Hausmann, assistant director of the Arts for Transit program, gave an overview of the commissions made through the program for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority in New York City. The MTA's "collection" contains art that, though not always "political" in the strict sense of the word, has political overtones. An excellent example is a mural commissioned for the program by Jean Shin, who was the next speaker in the lecture series. "Celadon Remnants" (2008) is a mosaic mural depicting vase silhouettes made out of broken Korean ceramic and glass for the LIRR Broadway Station in Queens, the station for a vibrant local Korean-American community. Celadon is a green-gray glaze frequently found on Asian ceramics, and the shards of celadon-colored materials in the mural (that Shin had shipped to New York from Korea) are recognized by the community as "remnants" from their homeland. The mural, according to Shin, "speaks to the rich, yet fractured, cultural history of the Korean diaspora."

Shin shares a similar cultural heritage with those who live in the neighborhood, so while she is not a resident of the community for whom she created "Celadon Remnants," their shared history bridges the gap to some degree in this particular public art project. Swoon (an artist from New York) has, in her most recent projects, moved away from creating "site-specific" works of public art. Swoon started her career by making life-size renderings of people and, using wheat paste, applied the drawings to the exterior walls of buildings around the city. In the tradition of artists who have incorporated performance in their work, Swoon now builds boats out of junk and reincarnated mechanical devices and, with a crew of artists, musicians, actors, writers and the like, embarks on journeys down rivers and across (small) seas, stopping to perform in the harbors of towns and villages along the way. Swoon's latest venture was to sail from Slovenia to the Venice Biennale. The surprising arrival of her regatta — which was not an official component of the exhibition — was a delightful critique of sorts of the established contemporary art world. Swoon's "public art" consists of bringing together a community — her crew — who, for a set period of time, create and perform work together. No physical works of art result from the project — even the

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

May 29, 2009

Amy Hausmann, assistant director, Arts for Transit, a program that commissions art for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, New York
Sponsored by the Portland Arts and Cultural Alliance

June 6, 2009

Jean Shin, artist (New York)
Sponsored by the Portland Arts and Cultural Alliance

July 12, 2009

Patricia Phillips, dean of graduate studies at the Rhode Island School of Design
Sponsored by the Waterville Arts Council

August 13, 2009

Sue Clifford, co-founder of Common Ground (United Kingdom)
Sponsored by the Tides Institute and Museum of Art

October 17, 2009

Swoon, artist (New York)
Sponsored by SPACE Gallery, Portland

October 21, 2009

Amy Franceschini, artist and founder of two artist collectives, Futurefarmers and Free Soil (San Francisco)
Sponsored by the Maine College of Art

November 13–14, 2009

Liz Lerman, founder of Liz Lerman Dance Exchange and MacArthur "Genius" Fellow (Maryland)
Sponsored by Mid-Coast Magnet and the Maine Arts Commission



▲ Brooklyn artist Swoon arrives at the Venice Biennale on a boat made of trash. Photo: Tod Seelie



▲ Amy Hausmann speaking at Portland's SPACE Gallery

boats they make are dismantled following a journey, though various parts of the crafts often find their way into future projects.

As Ad Reinhardt postulates, "Community building in art is community building." This was certainly true in Eastport during the weeklong program, "England to America: Building a Sense of Place Through the Work of Common Ground." The Tides Institute and Museum of Art hosted ecologist and writer Sue Clifford, who is one of the co-founders of Common Ground, a charitable organization initiated in the UK in 1983. The work of Common Ground is internationally recognized for playing a unique role in the arts and environmental fields, distinguished by the linking of nature with culture, focusing on the positive investment people can make in their own localities, championing popular democratic involvement and inspiring celebration as a starting point for action to improve the quality of our everyday places.

Clifford offered five workshops in different local communities, attended by more than 100 individuals, outlining the history of a tool that Common Ground has pioneered — the community creation of

Parish Maps. She presented the rationale, process and subsequent creation of these Community Maps in England and how a community anywhere could undertake the creation of their own Parish/Community Map. The concept of "parish" refers to the smallest, most local unit of civil governance in the UK. In the United States, it is equated with neighborhood, village or town — one's local community. Clifford explained that the democratic process for creating a map involves people outlining what they value in their place — wildlife, history, work, landmarks, buildings, people, festivals, etc. Subsequent to her workshops, a number of communities are now in the process of assessing the next steps for creating their own Parish Maps to illustrate locally distinctive activities and features — a focus on the everyday things that make each place significant and different from the next.

In addition to giving the workshops, Clifford was one of four participants in a special panel presentation titled "Public Art and Sense of Place," with noted writer, art critic and activist Lucy Lippard; internationally known British walking artist Hamish Fulton; and Canadian artist and former president of

PERCENT FOR ART CONTRACTED

Janet Redfield (Lincolnton, Maine) — University of Maine's Hutchinson Center in Belfast

Janet Redfield's stained glass will be installed in a cambered wall of windows in the building's atrium. In the atrium, Redfield's windows, designed to suggest the merging of three rivers in Belfast, will visually integrate the building's two wings. The stained glass will be just as dramatic at night, the inviting color drawing visitors into the building.

Carol May and Tim Watkins (Brooklyn, New York) — Ocean Avenue Elementary School in Portland

Carol May and Tim Watkins are creating four sculptures, each relating to one of the four basic elements: earth, wind, water and fire. The sculptures, which will be placed in front of the school, will move mechanically or electronically (solar power) in a manner that suggests each element's physical characteristics.

the Ontario College of Art Ron Shuebrook. The two-hour presentation engaged an audience of approximately 90 people who listened to each panelist describe his or her own perspective on public art.

The 30-year celebration of public art in Maine, which this lecture series punctuates, illuminates the power of public art, its community building, its social and environmental impact and its contribution to Maine's quality of place, a place that early on understood the importance of the object and the discourse of art in the public realm. Patricia Phillips, a scholar who has written extensively about public art and presented a lecture as part of this series, sums up the challenges, writing, "Any consideration of public art must first acknowledge that art is an active agent rather than an amenity or diversion and that its circumstances and context are inevitably complex and often deeply conflicted." With that in mind, the Maine Art Commission's Percent for Art program will strive to create educated, adventurous commissioning bodies and advocate for strong, smart and excellent art. ■

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MISSION The Maine Arts Com-
mission shall encourage and stim-
ulate public interest and partici-
pation in the cultural heritage and
cultural programs of our state; shall
expand the state's cultural resourc-
es; and shall encourage and assist
freedom of artistic expression for
the well-being of the arts, to meet
the needs and aspirations of per-
sons in all parts of the state.